



BLM NEWS

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For Immediate Release:

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BLM Distributes Over \$199 Million in PILT Checks to Local Governments for Tax-Exempt Lands

The Bureau of Land Management will send just over \$199 million on Sept. 20 to approximately 1,900 local governments across the United States in accordance with the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Act. Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton announced this year's payment is \$65 million more than last year's payment.

PILT payments offset the loss of tax revenue to localities caused by the presence of tax-exempt federal land within their jurisdictions. According to Acting BLM Director Nina Hatfield, the PILT payments are important to the economic well-being of communities. "PILT payments help fund vital community services, such as firefighting and police protection, and construction of hospitals and public schools," Hatfield said. The BLM has distributed more than \$2.7 billion in PILT payments to local governments since the program's inception in 1977.

The BLM distributes the congressionally appropriated PILT payments to eligible units of local governments across the nation and its territories each year. Payments are made for tax-exempt federal lands in the National Park and National Forest systems, federal lands administered by the BLM, lands dedicated to federal water resources development projects, and lands withdrawn from the public domain in other categories.

The BLM calculates the payments using the PILT Act formula, based on population and the amount of federal land within an affected county or census area. These payments are in addition to federal revenues transferred to the counties under other programs, such as income generated from use of federal land for livestock grazing and timber harvesting.

All states except Rhode Island, which has minimal federal land, are receiving PILT funds for fiscal year 2001, which ends Sept. 30. The District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands also receive PILT payments. The states with counties that collectively receive the largest amounts this year are: California: \$20,899,051; New Mexico: \$18,029,532; Alaska: \$13,341,403; Montana: \$15,713,745; Utah: \$15,352,775; and Colorado: \$15,240,782. More in-depth information may be obtained from BLM's website at <http://www.blm.gov/pilt>.